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ABSTRACT

This teaching guide presents objectives, activities, resources, and evaluative criteria for use by tenth grade world history classroom teachers as they develop and implement a unit on the African family. Objectives are to help students understand the nature and function of African families, recognize the similarities between African and American families, and understand changes in African family life over time. Basic social studies skills to be developed during the unit include formulating and asking analytical questions, interpreting data, and developing and using evaluation criteria. The materials are intended as the basis of a minicourse of approximately 20 hours duration. The unit was developed at an interdisciplinary summer workshop for teachers on African curriculum development. Nine lessons are presented. Various lessons focus on basic family characteristics, African childhood, kinship and marriage, socialization in traditional African families, economic aspects of African family life, and daily routines of families in various regions of Africa. For each lesson, information is presented on materials and equipment required, objectives, procedures, activities, homework, teacher background, and evaluation. Students are involved in a variety of activities, including dramatizations, reading assignments, analyzing literary selections, discussing films and reading assignments in class and in small groups, and comparing African and American family values. A bibliography concludes the document. (DE)

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"THE AFRICAN FAMILY"

An Instructional Unit for Tenth Grade World History

by

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This teaching unit on Africa was developed as part of an interdisciplinary workshop project in African curriculum development held on the University of Illinois' Urbana-Champaign campus in the summer of 1977. The workshop project, which was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, was carried out from 1977-80 and was integrated into an ongoing program of outreach services offered to teachers nationwide. For further information on teaching aids available through outreach services, contact:

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SO 012 697

This unit on the African family is designed to make the greatest possible use of the inductive method of teaching and learning within the limitations of time and materials available for doing it. The students will be expected to do most of the readings outside of class as homework. Class time will be largely devoted to small group work, class discussion, and group analysis of printed selections under the direction of the teacher. Stress will be placed upon "process" and method, not content.

The major purpose of this unit will be to help the student understand how one goes about learning about:

1. The African family and his own family.
2. The processes of socialization.
3. The functions of the family.
4. The changes in the family and their causes.

These are the skills I would like to teach in connection with this unit:

1. How to formulate and ask analytical questions.
2. How to generalize from particular, detailed information, and how to support generalizations.
3. How to compare interpretations.
4. How to bring together data from several sources and state conclusions based on that data.
5. How to develop and use criteria for purposes of evaluation.
6. How to use photographs as a source of usable data.
7. How to discuss people and customs that are different without being ethnocentric.

Some of the readings included here are actually too easy for tenth graders but they will be typed and the students will not see the large print and know that they came from books written for younger students.

It is estimated that the lesson plans included here will require a minimum of 19 class periods (55 minutes each).

The day before the unit is actually to begin, each student is to be given a copy of "African Family Life" by Bohannon and Curtin (pp. 102-111). (See copy included here.)

Ask the students to read it for the next day. Tell them its purpose is to introduce the traditional African family. Ask them to come to class the next day with notes made regarding matters mentioned in the article that they want clarified.

LESSON ONE

This lesson will give an opportunity to clarify and discuss the basic characteristics of the African family. No attempt will be made to deal, in a final way, with every aspect of the family. This will be attempted during the course of the unit.

Materials/Equipment

Reading: "African Family Life" by Bohannon and Curtin.

Objectives

1. Students should be able to explain how the polygamous family is different from the monogamous.
2. Students could give specific examples of important differences between their American family and the African family.
3. If asked to describe the "traditional" African family, the student could speak on polygyny, bridewealth, kinship, position of women.

Suggested Procedures

Give the students a chance to ask questions about the reading; have them use the notes they prepared for today. Get the students to answer the questions posed by students; on questionable matters, ask students to document their answers by pointing out the specific sentence on which they are basing their statement. Encourage the students to talk to each other instead of the teacher. Stay within the limits of the article.

If a clear definition of polygyny has not come out ask a student to define it for the group. How does this type of family meet the needs of Africans?

Ask for some comparisons (as to form and function and roles) of the African family (s) as described here and the student's own family.

Say: If this reading presents an accurate description of the traditional African family, then what is the traditional African family? What is desired at this point is not a neat final definition but a preliminary acquaintance with several of the major features.

If the students are making sly or strongly worded value judgements regarding polygyny let them know that they are doing so. Get them to state their values and examine them. Are these the values of the traditional American family? What must be some African values?

Homework/Preparation

Assign the reading "Birth and Childhood" by Jefferson and Skinner (pp. 16-26) for tomorrow. Ask the students to:

1. Study the readings.
2. Find out how they themselves were named and what their name means.
3. See if they can find out the infant mortality rate in their society.

Teacher Background (for Lesson 1)

The Dark Child by Camara Laye.

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe, pp. 61-65.

Evaluation

At the end of the session ask a student (or two) to sum up the major ideas brought out in the class session.

Possible test item: What is the traditional African family?

LESSON TWO

This lesson is meant to give the students something more than mere information about what childhood is like for Africans. It is hoped that by comparison and empathy, they will make some emotional committment to a slightly different understanding of a phase of life they are not far removed from. In addition, they will gain additional insight into the traditional family.

Materials/Equipment

Reading: "Birth and Childhood" by Jefferson and Skinner

Reading: "African Names: The Case of the Akan of Ghana," available from the African Studies Program, University of Illinois, 1208 West California Urbana, Illinois 61801

Objectives:

1. The students should be able to contribute some ideas that would help a person understand that in Africa, "the birth of a child is the birth of a soul and the continuation of a family."

2. The students should be able to describe the naming process and its importance.

3. The students should be able to explain the stages and ceremonies leading to adulthood.

4. Examples of total community involvement should be articulated by the students.

Suggested Procedures

Ask for volunteers to tell what they found out about how they were named and the meaning of their names. Try to determine if certain students have names whose meanings are significant and important to them or their family. Does the student take the name seriously?

Give each student a copy of the reading, "African Names: The Case of the Akan of Ghana." Give them five to ten minutes to read through it. Pass around copies of calendars that would cover the year of the student's birth so that each person can determine the day of the week he was born. Ask each student to determine their African names and write them in a prominent place in their notebook. Get them to discuss the information given in the article about names and name giving.

See if anyone in the class was able to discover the infant mortality rate for the United States or Missouri or Columbia, Mo. Can they relate this matter to particular information in the reading?

Ask: In Africa what is the significance of a new-born child? Be sure this idea comes out of the discussion: a child is an offspring of God and is part of a family that includes parents, sisters, brothers, cousins, and ancestors who will surround the child from birth to death, to birth into another life.

This might be a good time to introduce the term, "extended family," (although it isn't used in this article) so they can see it in its context. It will be more fully dealt with later.

The reading says that, "children in Africa are not forced to grow." Ask for an explanation of this. What do they think about "being forced to grow" in America?

What do they think of the ceremonies and steps by which an African reaches adulthood? Are there any steps and ceremonies for Americans? Should we have more? Are there advantages in this?

Ask them if they like the idea of "age sets." Why? Why not? It is most likely that some of the students will answer these questions without really knowing what an "age set" is. Have other students critically analyze these answers for their validity in view of what is actually said in the reading.

Call to the students' attention the various peoples (have the students name them) whose customs are described in the article and see if they can locate these peoples on the map.

Close by asking someone to sum up what has been learned by comparing African birth and childhood with their own.

Homework/Preparation

Assign the reading, "Kinship and Marriage" by Jefferson and Skinner (pp. 45-55) for tomorrow. Tell them that this article goes beyond birth and childhood to deal with family, family organization, and marriage. Ask them to:

1. Study the article.
2. Make a list of terms they think are important that are used in the article and which are defined there.
3. Inquire of their parents if they have available a family genealogy chart that can be brought to school. If none, how far back do they know the names of their family.

Teacher Background (for Lesson 2)

The Dark Child by Camara Laye.

Enchantment of Africa - Burundi by Allan Carpenter (ed.), pp. 70-74.

"Freetown Boy" by Robert Wellesley Cole in Africa Is People by Barbara Nolen,

Evaluation

Keep a record (on the seating chart) of the students who participate in the discussion and those who don't. Make a list of those who don't and refer to it durihg the next lesson in a positive effort to bring them into the discussion.

LESSON THREE

This lesson will add to and help clarify some of the complexities regarding the African family which the students encountered in Lesson One, but which were passed over lightly at that time. This explanation is "easier." It introduces some terms they will need to know in order to carry on an intelligent discussion. It deals with some matters that are very much on the minds of tenth graders.

Materials/Equipment

Reading: "Kinship and Marriage" by Jefferson and Skinner

Objectives

1. Students should be able to discuss the African family, correctly using the ideas and terms: patrilineal, matrilineal, lineage, family (nuclear), extended family, bride token (bridewealth).

2. Students should be able to explain how an "orderly chain binds the African child to its parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, uncles, cousins, and ancestors."

Suggested Procedures

Give the students a chance to ask questions about anything in the reading that puzzled them. Inquire as to their general reactions to the reading as a whole.

Ask them to get out the list of terms they made as they read the article. Have three people write their list on the chalkboard. Ask if anyone found others that are not on the board and add them. The list should at least include these: patrilineal, matrilineal, lineage, family, extended family, bride token.

Tell them that we will be using the term "nuclear family" for "family"; and "bridewealth" as well as "bride token."

Ask various people to define the basic terms on the board; insist upon precision of definition; steer them away from loose language. Ask which, if any, of these terms fit their own family and why. Do you know of any American families or family practices that tend to lean in the direction of matrilineal. Does anyone have or know of instances of extended American families (where there are living together in one house several generations, married siblings, uncles, aunts; where there are close ties, cooperation, mutual support)?

Would there be any special advantages to the extended family type organization? The students should bring out the fact that finding baby sitters is no problem, juvenile delinquents would be almost non-existent, there would be no problem in caring for the old, sick, or orphans.

Make certain that bridewealth is not seen as "buying a wife." Try to get across the idea that it is as if the groom and his family were posting bond or giving a guarantee of good performance. For the bride's family it represents the replacement (to some extent) of a valuable economic asset.

Make sure everyone understands who are "fathers," "mothers," "brothers," "sisters."

What do the students think about "arranged" marriages and the complex bargaining that is described? Try to get them to see beyond the sensational aspects of this to see the economic and social necessities of it all. The students will be expressing strong ethnocentric views; point this out to them and make sure they are aware of what they are doing at this point.

Ask: Are our marriage customs as well suited to our needs and circumstances as those of the Africans?

Suppose that after the marriage the African couple does not get along well together. What do they have going for them that might help?

Are there any new groups of people mentioned in this reading that we have not met with before? Who are they and where are they located?

Finish up this lesson by letting the students show the genealogy charts they have brought and tell about them. If time permits, there could be some explanation of the technical aspects of genealogy charts. Give the other students a chance to tell how far back they can trace their family. When this has been done, call on one of the students to tie this up with what was learned in this lesson.

Homework/Preparation

Ask the students: Who would like to learn about the Ibo people? Who would like to learn about the Zulu? (Have them locate these two groups.) On the basis of their preference divide the class into two groups. Hand out to the "Ibo" group a copy of the readings, "Growing Up" and "At Home" by Bleeker from The Ibo of Biafra, (pp. 29-56; 85-90). Give to the Zulu group the reading, "The Family" by Bleeker from The Zulu of South Africa, (pp. 35-61). Ask them to study the readings for tomorrow and as they do so, to think in an analytical way about the African family (this may have to be explained or illustrated a little.)

Teacher Background (for Lesson 3)

Things Fall Apart, by Chinua Achebe, pp. 104-112.

"I Marry My Cousin Duma" by Baba of Karo (in Africa Is People by Barbara Nolen).

"Family, Clan, and Lineage" in The Lugbara of Uganda by John Middleton, pp. 25-28.

Evaluation

During this discussion of African family organization and functioning, study the quality of student responses and try to help particular students improve by getting them to state their ideas more precisely or specifically.

LESSON FOUR

This lesson will give the students a chance to work in small groups where wider participation will be possible. They will be able to develop their analytical talents and learn to give and take others' viewpoints. They will have an opportunity to work out a comparison of two different interpretations of two groups of people. They will gain additional data and knowledge of the functioning of the traditional family and its socialization processes.

Materials/Equipment

Reading: "Growing Up," "At Home," "The Family" by Bleeker.

Pictures: Individual Igbo and Zulu in Africa: History of a Continent by Davidson.

Play script: "The Swamp Dwellers" by Wole Soyinka (found in Collected Plays by Wole Soyinka, 1973)

Overhead projector

Transparency: Africa's Vegetation

Objectives

1. The students should be able to set up criteria for comparing family organization and functions in a society.

2. Students should be able to describe the Igbo and Zulu family and tell some of the differences between them.

3. Students should be able to identify those factors or characteristics in the Igboand/or the Zulu family that make them " traditional."

4. The students should be able to suggest ways in which the Igbo and/or Zulu family's character is determined by the physical and social environment.

Suggested Procedures

Until now the readings and information the students have had access to dealt with the African family in general and among no specific people. This lesson acquaints them, in some detail, with two specific groups who are widely separated geographically, who have different environments and subsistence practices.

They will have read the assignment for today, so begin by giving them a little visual stimulation by showing them the large color pictures of Igbo and Zulu persons found in Davidson's Africa: History of a Continent. Walk up and down the aisles slowly enough that the students can have a good look at the half dozen or so pictures found in the book. Use others you may have or make a display of them at the front of the room.

Ask the students if they have any other knowledge of these people besides that found in the assigned readings.

Have the students locate on the map the areas and modern nations where these two groups are found and see if they can quickly characterize the main geographical features of those two regions. A transparency showing Africa's vegetation briefly projected might assist in this. This could be made into a more detailed analysis if there is time.

Mention that from this point on we will not deal with the African family in general but as it is found among specific peoples.

Tell the students that we are going to share with each other our knowledge of the Igboand Zulu family but before we can do that we will need some agreed upon criteria so that we can better understand each other and be able to make comparisons.

Have the students suggest some things (keeping in mind what they found in the reading for today) that are important to the basic structure and functioning of any family and which would allow comparison between families. Write their ideas on the chalkboard as they give them; put them all down whether useful or not. Ask questions to help them arrive at important ones which they may have forgotten, like divorce practices, positions held by old people, etc. Then have the students go over the items on the board and decide which criteria they want to use. This will take too long unless there is strong guidance by the teacher.

Divide the people who received the "Igbo" reading into two or more small groups (preferably letting them decide their group's composition) and do the same with the people who received the "Zulu" reading. Make sure there are the same number of "Igbo" small groups as there are "Zulu" small groups.

Tell all the groups that they are to make an analysis of their African group's family using the criteria agreed upon (which is still on the chalkboard). Ask them to record their conclusions on paper.

Give them class time to do this, however much it takes. Become their resource person, visiting each group and giving suggestions and encouragement.

When the groups have their analysis completed, instruct the students that they are now going to share their discoveries. Then match an "Igbo" small group with a "Zulu" small group and have them exchange their findings on each criteria item they set up.

After they have completed this, finish this lesson by calling them back together as one large group and ask them if they found any evidence that the physical and social environment determined essential characteristics of either family. Insist that they be very specific in this, perhaps pointing out to the class the exact sentence on which they base their conclusion.

What values in the Igbofamily (and Zulu family) are most important?

Homework/Preparation

Hand out the reading, "Life Among the Kikuyu" by Kenyatta (in Africa Is People by Nolen, pp. 20-27).

Ask the students to:

1. Study the reading for tomorrow.

2. Ask themselves, as they read, what new aspect of the African family, which we have said little about, is revealed in this reading.

Advanced Preparation:

Pick out eight students who are good readers, give them copies of the play, "The Swamp Dwellers"; assign parts; tell them how the play is going to be performed and when. Make arrangement for them to come in before or after

school (or both) to read through their parts together in advance of the performance in class.

Teacher Background (for Lesson 4)

The Bantu Civilizations of Southern Africa by E. Jefferson Murphy.

Evaluation:

This might be a good time to give a small informal unannounced test on some of the major ideas or specific terms learned in the first four lessons. Any or all of the objectives at the beginning of each lesson could be converted into test questions.

LESSON FIVE

This lesson is intended to take the student beyond marriage, divorce, polygyny, etc. to an understanding of the economic aspects of the traditional African family, which represents another important dimension. We move to another major region of Africa to study a new group, the Kikuyu, and to give the students some exposure to the ideas of a famous African leader, Jomo Kenyatta.

Materials/Equipment

Reading: "Life Among the Kikuyu," by Kenyatta (in Nolen).

"The Ibo Family: An Economic Partnership," by Leith-Ross.

Objectives

1. With regard to the African family, the students should be able to explain the business aspects of: the marital relation, the family's composition, the family's functions.

2. The students should be able to suggest some economic aspects of their own family and make some comparisons with the Kikuyu family in this regard.

Suggested Procedures

Tell the students that they are going to turn to the Kikuyu people to discover another important dimension of the African family which we have said little about up to this time.

Ask them: With regard to your reading assignment by Jomo Kenyatta, what did you conclude was the new dimension of the African family that we turn to today?

Since tenth graders know little about "economics," as such, and have difficulty recognizing those things that pertain to economics, it may take some directive questioning to lead them to the economic basis of the article. Once they arrive there, it might be a good thing to ask them what economics is and what things are included in it.

Give them each a copy of the short article, "The Igbo Family: An Economic Partnership" by Leith-Ross (p. 230). Ask them to read it to themselves. Give them a couple of minutes to read, then ask several of them to express in their own words the main idea in the first paragraph. What is the purpose of the second paragraph?

Ask them to keep this short reading about the Igbo in mind as they turn to the Kikuyu. Locate on the map this group in its proper area and nation. Ask: Who is Jomo Kenyatta? What do you know of recent events in his country?

If this article indicates the economic aspects of the African family (and we are going to assume that in a general way it is representative) then according to what Kenyatta says here, what are the economic aspects of the African family?

Write these down on the chalkboard as the students suggest them. Don't put down just anything; if an item seems questionable get the other students to critique it. Make sure they aren't naming mere economic factors but rather economic aspects of the family.

Get the students to comment on the significance of these various factors in relation to the total culture of the Kikuyu people.

Ask: Could any of these economic aspects of the family be found in your family? What are others that would relate to your family that we don't have on the board? How do the economic pursuits of your family fit into the total American culture?

Homework/Preparation

Assign the five short readings from Botswana, Country and People, by Oxfam Education Department:

"The Tshuma Family: A Family in Botswana"
"The Magowa Family: A Family in Botswana"
"A Budget of a Family in Botswana" (Two different ones)
"The Farming Year of a Village Family in Botswana"
"A Day in the Life of Village People in Botswana"

Ask the students to:

1. Study the five short articles.

2. See if their parents can give them some information on what percentage of their family's budget goes to food, clothing, shelter, medical expenses, utilities, education, taxes.

Teacher Background (for Lesson 5)

Enchantment of Africa-Kenya by Allan Carpenter (ed.).

East African Childhood: Three Versions by Lorene Fox (ed.).

Leaves of Grass by Karen Blixen.

Evaluation

Possible test item for the unit test: Compare the economic aspects of the African family with the economic aspects of the American family.

LESSON SIX

This lesson will introduce several real families living in yet another part of Africa. The students will get to see for the first time an African family in the daily routine of making ends meet, educating children, who does what, and other ordinary matters. Hopefully the outcome will be that the students will see Africans and families of humans like themselves.

Materials/Equipment

Reading: "The Tshuma Family: A Family in Botswana"
"The Magowa Family: A Family in Botswana"
"A Budget of a Family in Botswana" (2)
"The Farming Year of a Village Family in Botswana"
"A Day in the Life of Village People in Botswana"
"Marriage and the Family in Botswana: Some Modern Developments"
Fifteen black and white photographs of Botswana daily life.
All of the above materials from --
Botswana. Country and People
Published by Oxfam Education Department

Objectives

1. The students will be able to explain the division of labor in Botswana (which is somewhat representative of Africa) by age, sex, status.

2. The students will be able to make some valid generalizations about an African family's income, its source, the expenditures required, the relationship of these.

3. The students will be able to relate what they learned about the economic aspects of the family to these families and their activities.

4. The students will be able to tell about a number of African occupations.

5. Several areas where change has crept in can be specified.

Suggested Procedures

Suggest to the students that the descriptive material in these readings depicts rather average families in Africa today. Say: That being true, were any of you surprised at what you found? Were any of your images of "the African" shattered? Give them a chance to explain. Several myths about Africa can be quickly destroyed at this point. Have a student locate Botswana.

Have the 15 photographs of Botswana daily life arranged on the wall so they can easily be seen. Ask the students to get up and go over and study them for a few minutes.

After they have looked at them, ask: What descriptive information (what data) about these people is provided by these photographs, particularly as relating to the family?

Ask: Based on information in the pictures and in the readings, how is the work load divided among the people? On what bases is it divided? Who does what?

What would you guess is the occupation of the majority of the people in Africa? What other important occupations are revealed?

Can you relate what you learned in the previous lesson, about the economic aspects of the family, to these Botswana families?

Can you relate these families' functions to the natural forces and to physical environment?

Take a few minutes to look over the budgets of the two African families. What generalizations can you make regarding income, sources of income, expenses, the relationship of these? How does this compare with your family? Give them a chance to tell what they learned from their parents about the percentage of the family income that goes to various needs. Have several of them put their information on the board.

The expenses connected with polygyny will come up here and will have to be dealt with in a rational way.

Tell the students that the Botswana families described here represent modern African families; however, they tend to be more traditional families than not; on the other hand, there are important changes taking place all over Africa today in matters relating to the family. Emphasize that from this point on the rest of this unit on the African family is going to deal with the changing modern African family, the particular changes and the forces promoting these changes, and the impact of all this upon people.

Tell them that to initiate this new trend in our study, we will now look at some modern developments in Botswana in matters of marriage and the family.

Hand out the reading titled, "Marriage and the Family in Botswana: Some Modern Developments." Give them a few minutes to read it. Then ask: What is the significance of these changes? Are they important? Are they fundamental changes? Are they for the better or for worse?

To close this, ask several students to sum up briefly the main thing they learned in this lesson.

Homework/Preparation

None

Teacher Background (for Lesson 6)

Enchantment of Africa-Botswana by Allan Carpenter (ed.).

Evaluation

Make written note of those who made an effort (and how much of one) to obtain information on their own family's budget.

LESSON SEVEN

This lesson will give the students a chance to become personally involved with some individual African characters with whom they will likely identify in different ways. The play, to be performed by the students, will confront the performers and the audience with a traditional family caught up in the midst of changes that tear at its vitals in significant ways. They will gain some new insights into the nature of the forces for and against change, how they operate, and their effects on the family.

Materials/Equipment

Play Script: "The Swamp Dwellers" by Wole Soyinka

Objectives

1. Students should be able to identify those aspects of the family portrayed in the play that would represent the "traditional."

2. Students should be able to identify those forces that are causing changes in the family or are preventing change.

3. The students should be able to explain why a drama can be a useful source of evidence about human institutions.

Suggested Procedures

Explain that today and tomorrow we are going to be listening to a drama unfold; a drama that will help us see the Africans (in this case, the Yoruba) as real people whose most fundamental institutions are undergoing change. This play will provide us with some answers to these questions (which should be written on the board or duplicated):

1. What "traditional" aspects of the family are revealed in the play?
2. What are the sources or causes of what changes?
3. How was this family shaped by its social and physical environment?
4. What values are presented? Are there conflicting values? Whose?
5. Of what significance is the beggar to the story? the Kadiye?

Go over the questions briefly with the students to make sure they understand the question.

Pass out copies of the play to the students who are not performing.

Have a student narrator read the introduction and then proceed with the drama. After it is completed (probably after two class periods) ask the students to discuss the five questions.

Homework/Preparation

Hand out the three poems:

Song of Lawino by Ogot p'Bitek, Nairobi, 1968.
"One Wife for One Man" by Frank Aig-Imonkhuede (In Nigeria, The Land, Its Art and Its People by Frederick Lumley, pp. 102-103
"The Girls of Lagos" by Cyprian Ekwensi (In Nigeria, The Land, Its Art and Its People by Frederick Lumley, p. 90

Ask the students to:

1. Study the poems

2. Write down on a piece of paper all of the apparent scurces or reasons for the conflict or discontent expressed.

Teacher Background (for Lesson 7)

No Longer at Ease by Chinua Achebe.

"Culture and Changing Values in Africa" in The United States and Africa by Walter Goldschmidt, pp. 165-167.

Evaluation

Ask one or more students to explain why this play is important to our study of the African family.

This lesson uses poetic expression (the language of emotion) to reveal a number of sources and kinds of trouble plaguing the African family in today's world. The students will have no trouble understanding and analyzing what is being said here and how the family may be affected in the future.

Materials/Equipment

Poems: Song of Lawino by Ogot p'Bitek

"One Wife for One Man" by Frank Aig-Imonkhuede

"The Girls of Lagos" by Cyprian Ekwensi

Objectives

1. The students will be able to pick out of the poems the particular causes of trouble and changes in the African family.

2. The students will be able to translate the poetic complaints into common human problems that affect all societies.

Suggested Procedures

Give the students an opportunity to ask about any statements in the poems they did not understand. Take the poems, one by one, and ask the students to react to them. Ask the students to determine the setting for these poems: Kenya (East Africa) and Nigeria (West Africa). Is this significant?

Ask: What changes in the African family are reflected here by these poets? Their answers will be more revealing if they couple the new with the traditional.

Are any of the behaviors, alluded to in the poems, a problem in American society? Are any of them changing our family? How?

What common universal human problems are these poets dealing with?

If you were writing a poem (of the type these are) what complaints would you state, with reference to family life? Do any of these indicate the need for change? Why?

Homework/Preparation

Assign the reading, "The African Family: A Changing Tradition," together with the two following source readings by Rich and Wallerstein (pp. 45-52).

Ask the students to:

1. Study the introduction and the two source readings that follow.

2. Be able to answer the four questions at the beginning of the reading on page 45.

3. Answer in writing the five questions (found on page 52) on the two source readings.

Teacher Background (for Lesson 8)

"Harsh Realities" by Cecilia Ndeti in World Health.

Evaluation

Ask the students to put into writing, to turn in, the problems facing the modern African family, according to these poets. Have them do it from memory.

LESSON NINE

This lesson will serve to review some of the technical terms the students have learned for analyzing the African family. The two source readings will help dramatize some of the problems of modern African marriages, and at the same time make them aware of some critical problems in our society.

Materials/Equipment

Readings: "The African Family: A Changing Tradition," together with the two accompanying source readings by Rich and Wallerstein.

Objectives

1. The students should be able to give the names and meanings of some useful terms that can be employed to analyze the African family.

2. The students should be able to state some opinions on whether the traditional African family is doomed, and back them up with reasons.

3. A number of modern African marriage problems can be articulated by the students and compared to American society.

Suggested Procedures

See if there are any problems regarding this article's review of useful terms. Point out that "patriarchal," "unilineal," "co-wife" have not been used by us before this.

Give the students a chance to express their opinions on whether or not the traditional African family is doomed. Make sure they back their opinions with some reasonable evidence. Is the American family, as we know it, doomed?

Have them turn in their answers to the five questions found at the end of the article. Read back to them several student answers to the first question and get their reactions. Do the same with the second question and continue with the others, depending on the amount of time available.

Ask: What are the basic problems underlying the predicaments described in the readings? Do these problems exist in American society? How important are these problems? Are there any reasonable solutions to them?

What does change do to the family? to its values?

Homework/Preparation

Assign the reading, "Meet Nterenke-James Teren" by Llwellyn (pp. 33-35) and "Meet Btil and Mgana-Betty and Martha" by Llwellyn (pp. 48-52).

Ask the students to:

1. Study the readings

2. Concentrate on how the ideas and persons described can be related to our concern for "family."

Teacher Background (for Lesson 9)

"Hard Labor" by N. N. Mashalaba in World Health.

"The Free Women of Congo City" by Basil Davidson (in African Heritage by Jacob Drackler

Evaluation

Grade their answers to the five questions they turned in.

LESSON TEN

This lesson attempts to get the students to relate the products of the African family (in this case, one man and two women) to the family as an institution, and to judge the African family and its problems by its products. The students will get to know more people, which is important.

Materials/Equipment

Reading: "Meet Nterenke-James Teren" by Llwellyn.

"Meet Btil and Mgana-Betty and Martha" by Llwellyn.

Objectives

1. Students should be able to show how certain personal and cultural characteristics can be traced to the family.

2. The students should be able to suggest some possible solutions to the problems posed in these readings; solutions that would be within the context of the culture itself.

Suggested Procedures

The "Betty and Martha" reading can be quickly adapted by the students so as to use it as a "walk-on" dramatic scene, in which the students would act out the parts with no rehearsal. This would make it come alive and perhaps mean more to the students.

Ask the students to indicate particular sentences in the readings where they detect the decay or problems of the Masai family.

Are the changes that have overtaken the individuals shown here "good" or "bad," constructive or destructive, enlightened or decadent? Support your answer.

Are the changes Betty and Martha want realistic? Explain.

How would you characterize James Teren, the man? What exactly is his problem?

Do the problems implied in these readings have any parallels in American society? Explain. What should be done about them?

Homework/Preparation

Assign the reading: "Beginning of the End" by Achebe (found in The Sacrificial Egg and Other Short Stories, 1962) for tomorrow.

Ask the students to:

1. Study the reading.

2. Come to class prepared to answer questions about the conflicts and values represented in the reading.

Announce the unit test on "The African Family" and give the students some information on what kind of test it will be.

Teacher Background (for Lesson 10)

Young and Black in Africa by A. Okion Ojigbo.

"The Winner" in Kalasanda by Barbara Kimenye, pp. 37-48.

Evaluation

Ask the students to prepare some sample test questions of the kind they would feel to be appropriate ones for determining the amount and kind of learning that has resulted from this unit.

LESSON ELEVEN

This final lesson brings into sharp focus the most basic African family characteristics that are being questioned and changed by a new generation of young Africans. It attempts to show the modern family being forged, and points the way to what may be the results.

Materials/Equipment

Reading: "Beginning of the End," by Achebe.

Objectives

1. The students should be able to detail certain African values and explain the conflicts surrounding them.

2. The students should be able to compare American family values with African family values, and the conflicts also.

Suggested Procedures

Collect the test questions the students prepared and, if there is time, discuss some of them.

Then ask the students to discuss these questions:

1. What conflicts in values are described in the case of Nnaemaka and his father?

2. Why did these conflicts arise? With what consequences for Emeka? for Okeke?

3. Were the conflicts resolved? How?

4. How do these conflicts in values compare with those that arise in your house?

5. What does the case of Nnaemaka and his father tell you about the value system of these African people?

Ask the students to discuss whether (and how much) this unit on the African family has --

A. Helped them understand Africa and Africans.

B. Given them insights into their own family and its problems.

C. Presented them with ideas regarding what must be done about the family's future.

Homework/Preparation

Review all notes and materials for the unit test tomorrow.

Teacher Background (for Lesson 11)

Cry Sorrow, Cry Joy by Jane Ann Moore (ed.).

Evaluation

The unit test over "The African Family" should not be an objective one because the teaching-learning method has not contributed to that type of evaluation. Ideally, the test would be an essay test, including a performance type exercise wherein the students are presented with a reading (one they haven't seen) on the African family and then asked to evaluate it individually, using the same techniques and methods that we used in class together.

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